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Efforts to Panamas Government to improve Whale Watching Regulation in Bocas del Toro Caribbeans of Panama

Marco Mendizabal, Zedna Guerra, Luis Pinto, Rozio
Ramirez, Ines Campbell, Luis Higuera, Luis Pinto,
Raul Delgado



INTERNATIONAL
WHALING COMMISSION

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Mendizabal, M.¹. Guerra, Z.¹. Campbell, I.¹. Delgado, R.¹. Pinto, L.¹, Ramírez, R.¹, Higuera, L.¹
Authority of Aquatic Resources of Panama

Based on the scientific and reported facts that have shown the detrimental effects and short-term changes on the dolphin resident population, as results of the dolphin-watching activity in the area of Bocas del Toro, the Authority of Aquatic Resources of Panama has the following recommendations to help lessen future negative effects:

1. Actually Resolution No.01 of January 29, 2007; "By which the whale watching in the territorial waters of the Republic of Panama is standard.", are in a review process with a clear protocol for granting permits to regulate and control the dolphin watching activity in special area to Bocas del Toro.
2. To train potential boaters in order to carry the activity and who will commit to strictly abide the international and local standards of whale/dolphin watching.
3. To ordain the activity by only authorizing a permit to conduct this activity to those who pass this training. (Follow up evaluation).
4. To establish the frequency of the activity (i.e., based on the capacity of the area to safely conduct a certain numbers of boats at a given time).
5. To enforce the vigilance of these authorized boaters on a temporal-based criterion.
6. To perform periodic control and penalize those who do not perform within the established standards.
7. In order to mitigate similar negative effects in other areas where whale/dolphin watching has been suggested (such as Gulf of Chiriquí and Pedasi); suitability assessment studies will be conducted based on scientific data and lessons learned.
8. Important to improve a Action Plan That includes community education to raise awareness of the importance of the conservation and management sustainable of the dolphin population in their natural habitat..